

chief emphasis upon the fact that the slave was owned by his master, who could transfer his ownership for a price, just as in the case of any other chattel. But when the relationship of master and slave is looked at without any exaggerated notions of the importance of property and mainly with the view of realizing how that relationship was actually lived, it soon becomes clear that the fact of ownership is of relatively little importance. What is important is that the terms of the relationship are wholly determined by the master and that the slave does not give his assent but simply submits. It is equally important to realize that the master-and-slave relationship is never determinate; the rule of a slave's life is not anything fixed by stipulation in a bond but may be merely to-day's caprice and to-morrow's mood.

In what, now, does the position of the working-man under a time-wage differ from that of the bond-slave? Apart from his being, not a chattel owned but a freeman, the chief likenesses and differences are these: while the slave receives in return for his services bed and board of a quality not agreed upon but determined wholly by the master, the worker receives a definite wage; on the other hand, both slave and wage-earner render service, the quantity of which is rarely determined in advance with any accuracy or definiteness, the master in both cases exacting what he considers to be a day's work. The difference between slave and wage-earner, then, is one of degree in the definiteness with which his task is determined and set down in a written or verbal agreement.

What is the conduct of slave, and what is the conduct of wage-earner in these circumstances? It should not be surprising if there is often a great similarity. On every side we hear to-day the employer's complaint that the workers limit their output, practice "ca' canny," "soldier on the job." In their moral indignation over the unrighteousness of the trade-union demand for a closed shop, the employers are wont to attribute the perpetuation, if not the discovery of such practices to the trade unions. As a matter of fact, "ca' canny" has been practised ever since the first slave served the first master. Deplorable, from a broadly social point of view, as the limitation of production may be, the far more vital fact is that the practice of "ca' canny" and its like is merely an expression of the survival of slave-morality among the workers. This morality has, of course, survived because, fundamentally, much of slavery has survived.

Where the basis of payment is by results or by the product of the worker's labour—where his work, as our industrial doctors tell us so proudly, has been put upon an "incentive basis"—a new problem arises. The "area of conflict" ceases to be the amount of service to be rendered in return for a fixed wage, and the battle becomes one over the "price" payable for the product of labour. It need not concern us here and now how such bargains are made or how they should be made. What is important is to realize two cardinal facts, first that the ethics of these bargains can be expressed in a major principle of the sacredness of a bargain, once it is made. The second fact of cardinal importance, is that all adherence to the principles of a "just price" has long since been abandoned in favour of a complete submission to the relentless forces of the market. We still uphold some kind of a "standard of living" as a principle in wage payment, and with regret and resignation record the findings of our social students that this standard is

mainly a dream never to be fully realized except here and there and for a time.

And yet, it is this fiction of the "free contract" which we are asked to apply to every relationship of life. That it is not universally applied—though the fiction has had several centuries of growth—is not because it has not been tried but because experience has shown that its application has made unliveable any relationship that it has touched.

There are those who see in the organized labour movement of to-day great possibilities for the world's betterment. To many of those who are aware of it, that movement itself is a religion, but to those of us who see clearly how the damnable ethics of the free contract has atomized our life and scattered it like star-dust into space, there may at least be left the hope that in the heart of humanity there still remain a yearning and an impulse to live in a liveable way all the relations of life, and to create a morality which shall be neither "slave-morality" nor the morality of the so-called "free contract."

THEODORE M. AVE-LALLEMANT.

THE NEW NEGRO.

BEFORE the war, the Negroes of the United States suffered more than a full measure of all the wrongs that have led to the double revolt of small nations and suppressed classes in Europe. Individually the Negro workers, who form a very large portion of the coloured population, have borne all the hardships of their economic class, and collectively the race has been subjected to special disabilities, political, economic and social, such as the limitation of the right to vote and to hold office, the denial of justice, the practices of lynching and peonage, the discrimination of white labour unions, segregation in trains and in residential districts, and the limitation of educational opportunities. Now it is perfectly obvious that every sort of discrimination against Negroes, as such, tends to unite them as a racial group, and it is equally obvious that the appearance of economic differences among the Negroes themselves has exactly the opposite effect. During recent years, the development of economic differentiations has been very marked, but there is some evidence that racial animosity is likewise on the increase; and it is precisely this complication of class and race alignments that makes the Negro problem the most uncertain factor in the future of the country.

The people who are attempting to deal with this situation fall naturally into three groups, as determined by the attitude they take toward the questions of race and class. Certain politicians and an increasing number of welfare-workers and educators hold an essentially liberal position, in that they disregard racial and economic divisions and attempt to appeal to black men and white as individual citizens. The second group champions Socialism and industrial unionism, and attempts to unite all workers, irrespective of race and colour, upon the basis of common economic interest. The third group considers white Socialists almost as hateful as white Democrats; and against them all it preaches the doctrine of racial unity, Negro nationalism, and the final overthrow of Caucasian supremacy.

In so far as it may be classed as an attempt at solution, the whole "Black Republican" movement belongs to the category of non-racial, non-economic answers to the Negro problem. Tradition and sentiment have bound the coloured people so completely to the Grand

Old Party, that Republican candidates have generally secured the black vote without giving either promise or performance in return. It would be hard to find better proof of this proposition than is contained in the report on a questionnaire sent by the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People to seventeen Presidential candidates now before the country. In the questionnaire the candidates were asked to state, among other things, whether they would favour the enactment of Federal laws against lynching, and the enforcement of the Fourteenth Amendment by the reduction of the representation of States which disfranchise some of their citizens. In reply, Senator Harding stated that it was the business of the National Conventions to frame platforms and policies, and Senator Poindexter declared himself "in favour of maintaining the legal rights and opportunities of all citizens, regardless of colour or condition." As for the rest, Citizens Hoover and Johnson were as silent as Generals Wood and Pershing. The point is this: in the northern States, where the coloured vote counts, the Negroes will vote Republican whatever happens; whereas some of the northern white men might be frightened into Democracy by too much pro-Africanism on the part of the Republican candidate. On the other hand, the coloured vote in the south isn't worth a buffalo nickel to anybody under present conditions, and can hardly be made so, at an early date, by any means short of another Civil War.

The mess the Arkansas Republicans have gotten into will show pretty clearly how the black Republican vote is handled south of the Line. When Negro delegates were denied seats at the State Convention at Little Rock, they bolted and elected their own delegates to the National Convention, and also nominated a Negro candidate for governor. The entire delegations to the Republican National Convention from Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina and Virginia are being contested; of 122 places in the Convention now in dispute, 118 are from Southern Democratic States, where the fight between the so-called "Lily White" and "Black and Tan" elements is running its usual course. And the saddest part of it is, that all this fuss is being made over the business of nominating a candidate who will promise the southern Negroes nothing, and for whom most of them will not be allowed to vote.

If the Republicans disregard racial and economic lines, the educational-welfare groups go even farther toward universal brotherhood by dropping even political partisanship. Somewhat typical of this attitude are the rejoicings of Robert R. Moton, President of Tuskegee Institute, over the fact that "Although there are 15,000,000 Negroes in this country, not one of them was ever captured in the Federal dragnets which recently gathered in bolsheviks, anarchists and other 'reds.'" President Monton's conclusion is that "the loyalty of the Negro race can never be questioned."

The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People fairly represents the co-operation of white and coloured citizens in the liberal "appeal to the conscience of America" on behalf of the civil and political rights of the Negro. The Board of Directors of the Association is half white and half coloured, and its membership of 91,000 is about ninety per cent coloured. The *Crisis*, a magazine published by this organization, has a circulation of about 100,000 copies per month, some of which go to Africa. The Association has no economic or political programme, and its

appeal is quite specifically an appeal to the righteous; nevertheless, its work in general, and its agitation against lynching in particular, have unquestionably been of very considerable value.

The civil-rights programme of the N. A. A. C. P. is supplemented, on the side of industrial welfare, by the work of the National Urban League. It is the aim of this organization to open up new industrial opportunities to Negro workers, and to give attention to conditions of work and recreation in communities where Negroes are employed in considerable numbers. During 1919 the various locals of the League persuaded the managers of 135 industrial plants to employ Negroes for the first time; and during the same period twenty-two welfare workers were placed in plants where Negroes were engaged. The organization has also declared its sympathy with efforts to unionize Negro labour.

At the last National Convention of the American Federation of Labour, it became evident that trade unionism was prepared to give considerable attention to the organization of Negro workers. Forty-six or more of the hundred and thirteen Internationals included in the Federation already admit Negro members, and the Convention for 1919 voted to bring pressure to bear upon the other Internationals by organizing independent locals directly under the Federation wherever the existing unions will not accept coloured applicants. According to a statement made by President Gompers, the A. F. of L. now has two paid organizers and thirteen volunteers at work among the Negroes.

But respectable trade-unionism—like Republican politics, and the liberal appeal to the American conscience—is by no means satisfactory to the leaders of the second major school of thought on the Negro problem. Here, in place of a liberal disregard of class and race lines, we have the preaching of a class-war in which "the workers of the world," irrespective of race and colour, are urged to unite against their oppressors. In politics this group is Socialist; in the field of labour-organization, it inclines to favour the I. W. W. rather than the unions of the A. F. of L. The Socialist party, on its part, has recognized the potential value of the Negro vote, and has included in its national platform a declaration in favour of full political and economic rights for Negroes; this party has also made special provision for the spread of propaganda among the Negroes, and has employed three organizers for this purpose. No statistics are available as to the number of Negro Socialists in this country; but, according to the statement of an I. W. W. organizer, ten per cent of the members of the latter organization are coloured; in other words, the membership of the I. W. W. corresponds pretty closely with the population of the United States in the matter of colour-composition.

The chief organ of the Negro Socialist-syndicalists—a magazine with a circulation of some 20,000 copies a month—is characterized in the following terms by Attorney-General Palmer:

The *Messenger* [he says] . . . is by long odds the most able and the most dangerous of all the Negro publications. It is representative of the most educated thought among the Negroes.

Referring to the Socialist party, and to the National Labour party, which has also adopted a demand in favour of Negro rights, this interesting publication says:

We have constantly maintained that the solution of the Negro problem rests with the alliance of Negroes with radical organizations. . . . Here are two organizations largely

composed of white people, who have adopted fundamental methods for the solution of the problems affecting the white and Negro races in the United States. This is not because there is any special love for the Negro on the part of the groups which compose these conventions, but because it is impossible for them to attain the ends and objects at which they are aiming unless these fundamental rights of the Negro are granted to him.

In another number the editor speaks further in the same vein:

We do not depend upon professions of friendship or flowery promises, but only intelligent self-interest. The position of white labour is already changing rapidly in its relation to Negro labour, not because white labour likes Negro labour any better, but because it realizes that the only way white labour can raise its standard of living is to raise the standard of living of its competitors. This sound position will be taken by white labour as rapidly as it becomes more intelligent and class conscious. . . .

Our political philosophy is Socialism, not State Socialism. For more than two years, now, it has functioned in Russia. . . . The [Negro] Left Wing group holds that the greatest power the Negro possesses is his power to combine with the Socialist present minority and assist it in becoming the majority.

It would appear then that the *Messenger* group is convinced that the solution of the Negro problem is to be found in the solidarity of all workers, white and black. And yet it is very evident that, from time to time, lynchings and race-riots put a rude strain upon the inter-racial creed of these Socialist-syndicalists. Take, for example, this quotation, also from the *Messenger*:

We are . . . urging Negroes and other oppressed groups confronted with lynching or mob violence to act upon the recognized and accepted law of self-defence. . . . The black man has no rights which will be respected unless the black man enforces that respect. It is his business to decide that just as he went 3000 miles away to fight for alleged democracy in Europe and for others, he can lay down his life, honourably and peacefully, for himself in the United States. . . . New Negroes are determined to make their dying a costly investment for all concerned. . . . This new spirit is but a reflex of the Great War.

And it is this spirit that, in time of pressure—in the time of such riots as those of Washington and Chicago—must unite the Negro radicals with the supporters of the third and most startling answer to the race problem—"African nationalism." Perhaps this expression will always remain strange to American ears—and then again it may become quite familiar within a few years. For, after all, a rebellious hatred of the white race as a whole is the Negro's easiest reaction to wrongs, most of which certainly seem to fall upon him rather as a black man than as a workingman; this rebellious spirit needs only a common racial objective to give it unity, and that it seems now in a measure to have gotten. The "Negro-First" propaganda is largely the work of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League of the World—an organization which claims a million adherents in the United States, the West Indies, South America and South Africa, and announces as its final object the establishment of a black empire in Africa. The following quotation from the *Negro World* will give an idea of the nature of this remarkable movement:

Mobs of white men all over the world will continue to lynch and burn Negroes as long as we remain divided among ourselves. The very moment all the Negroes of this and other countries start to stand together, that very time will see the white man standing in fear of the Negro race even as he stands in fear of the yellow race of Japan to-day. The Negro must now organize all over the world, 400,000,000 strong, to administer to our oppressors their Waterloo. . . . Let every Negro all over the world prepare for the new

emancipation. The Fatherland, Africa, has been kept by God Almighty for the Negro to redeem, and we, young men and women of the race, have pledged ourselves to plant there the flag of freedom and of empire.

Connected with the U. N. I. A. are the Black Star Steamship Line, capitalized at \$10,000,000, and the Negro Factories Corporation, capitalized at \$1,000,000. Just what these astonishing figures represent in actual cash we have no means of knowing, but this much is certain: the Black Star Line has already in operation one of the multitude of steamers which—say the prophets of the movement—will some day ply between the Negro lands of the world. To cap the climax, the U. N. I. A. will hold in New York during the month of August an "International Convention of Deputies" who will elect "His Supreme Highness, the Potentate; His Highness, the Supreme Deputy, and other high officials who will preside over the destiny of the Negro peoples of the world until the African Empire is founded."

However laughable this language may be, there is no doubt that something is happening in the Negro world—something that can not be laughed down, any more than the Germans could laugh down the Senegalese. If any further proof of this is needed, it can be found in the pages of a magazine called the *Crusader*. On the cover of this magazine is the figure of a black man bearing a spear and a shield, and inside one finds this sort of thing:

Let us notice a combat between black boys and white boys, and we will see that the blacks exchange two or three cuffs for one. And no single white man will attack a Negro until he is first sure that he has some other help than himself, for the Negro would endeavour to greet him with such blows as only one who knows that there is no other god but God can. . . . Do not fail to teach your children the truth, for Africa is our heritage, the hope of our salvation.

And in another number, this:

What the Negro needs to know is that in many qualities he is the superior of the white man. He needs to know these qualities and to believe in them and insist on them.

To complete the familiar paraphernalia of nationalism with historical illusion, the coloured people are urged by the *Negro World* to "restore the ancient glories of Ethiopia."

In the face of this movement, American liberalism seeks to preserve its calm unconsciousness of race; even as it has sought to keep up the appearance of moral disinterestedness in the realm of economic interests. And just as the liberals, for all their good intentions, did not succeed in forestalling class-movements among the white workers, it is pretty certain that they can not find palliatives enough to sweep back "the rising tide of colour." The Socialist-syndicalist group, on the other hand, replaces the appeal to racial unity with a frank appeal to economic interest.

The conflict between the class-movement and the race-movement is fundamental and direct. If the expansion of American unionism leaves the Negroes for the most part unorganized, the white workers may rest assured that their coloured competitors will turn to racial organization—black unions against white. If, on the other hand, the Negro workers can be absorbed into a general labour movement, the race problem may lose some of its difficulty, as, in the course of time, the labour-problem approaches a solution. Racial division may serve the interests of the old order for the present, but in the end it will profit no one but the munitions-makers.

GEROUD ROBINSON.